

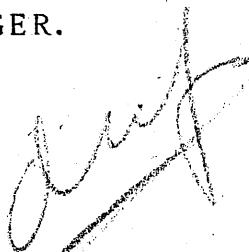
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THE SAVIOR'S CREED.

SPRINGER.

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THE SAVIOR'S CREED.

A PLEA FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY,

BY

RUTER WILLIAM SPRINGER, A. M., LL. M.,

CHAPLAIN, ARTILLERY CORPS,

UNITED STATES ARMY.

FORT WASHINGTON, MD.

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RUTER W. SPRINGER,
Fort Washington, Md.

To every child of God who is earnestly longing for the unity of the Christian family on earth, *and who is willing to pay the cost*, this book is dedicated in sincerest fraternal love.

“Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring; and they shall HEAR MY VOICE; and they shall become one flock, one Shepherd . . .

I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me . . . Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that shall believe on me through their word: that they may all be *one*.”

JESUS CHRIST.

John 10: 16; 17: 9, 20, 21.

THE SAVIOR'S CREED.

THE SAVIOR'S CREED!—What a world of hope dwells in those words! We have had Apostles' creeds and Nicene creeds, creeds of the early Christian leaders, and modern "articles of religion" and "statements of Christian doctrine"; long creeds, short creeds, creeds so abstruse that none but their authors could understand them—if they did;—creeds, like Bud Means', to "put in your best licks for Him, you know",¹ so simple and rough that in a theological sense they are not really creeds at all;—creeds in every variety and style. Yet the great hungry world is unsatisfied: it has kept on making creeds for itself, because it wanted something in the way of a creed, that it felt must somewhere be and was undiscovered as yet. Oh! we cry, if Jesus had only made us a creed,—everything that he did was perfect, and his creed would have satisfied my hungry heart and set me in right relations with God and my fellow-men!

Is it possible that our Savior formulated a creed? Did He tell it to anybody? Is it anywhere now in existence, authentic and unchanged? Can it be obtained, understood and profitably used by all or by any? —In the following pages an effort will be made to answer these questions.

It seems quite strange, yet is nevertheless a fact, that, with all our modern tendencies towards practical Christianity, and with all our revulsion from the spirit of that infamous age of mingled creed-making and crime through which the Christian Church struggled for a thousand years, there should now be found a strong and increasing demand for a new Christian creed.² This seems to be largely due to a feeling that, having outgrown the old bitterness and entered upon a new religious era of fraternal coöperation, we

¹ The Hoosier Schoolmaster, by Edward Eggleston, ch. 34.

² For example:—"The first real faith that shall arise upon the ruins of the old worn-out creeds will transform the whole of our actual social organization" (Mazzini, quoted in the Mind of the Master, ch. 15, p. 324). "No church since the early centuries has had the courage to formulate an ethical creed. . . . Imagine a body of Christians who should take their stand on the Sermon of Jesus, and conceive their creed on his lines. . . . Who would refuse to sign this creed?" (Watson, same, p. 21) "New creeds put forth from time to

need a new and joint statement of our essentials, upon which all Christian sects may unite for war and work.

Another even more notable tendency of our times is expressed by the watch-words, "Back to Christ"¹: This is evidenced by the enormous number² of "Lives of Christ" which have recently appeared, besides many historical novels laid in the days of Christ; by the historical tendency of present higher criticism; by the unusual impetus recently given to Biblical archæology; by the tone of the pulpit and religious press; by the decidedly philanthropic turn of our modern religious efforts; and by a thousand other things, great and small, which show the presence of a broad, deep and mighty current.

time have not met the requirements of the situation" (R. T. Ely, Introduction to Freemantle's *The World as the Subject of Redemption*). "The result to which we look must be . . . a supreme Christian federation (a federation the feeble beginnings of which we already see), with which all nations and minor societies will work in harmony" (Freemantle, same, p. 37). "Everywhere is heard a general demand in the churches for a simpler creed" (Edwin Markham).

¹ "The center of all theology to a Christian lies in the character of Jesus Christ. . . . We shall ultimately have the one great ideal, that of the life of Christ, and one spirit, the spirit of Christ" (Freemantle, same, pp. 319 and 36).

"Vos regat Christus, sibi quos revinxit:
Obsequi sectis pudeat probrosis;
Occidat livor, sociasque in unum
Cogite vires."

Ode of Leo XIII to the Franks; the following translation is by Rev. John F. Quirk, S. J.:

"Let Christ reign over you;—His bondmen ye!
What shame to serve base creeds when one is free!
Let envy perish, let your study be
To unify your kind."

² Hurst's *Literature of Theology*, 1896, gives:—Lives of Christ, before 1860, eight; 1860 to 1889, seventy-six; complete list, to date of book, one hundred and two; besides 23 harmonies, 2 on Jesus's temptation, 19 on his passion and death, and 14 on his resurrection and meditation. Novels laid in the time of Christ not catalogued.

The non-biblical citations in this work are only such as have come casually to hand, principally from my own library, and without special or systematic search. Any effort at a complete and systematic exhibit would be utterly futile and would probably result in burying the text under a mountain of illustration. R. W. S.

Surely, if, among the many ancient and lost documents which our archæologists are at present so rapidly unearthing, there should be found a copy of a creed taught by Jesus to his disciples and authentically recorded by them, how gladly would it be welcomed, how carefully studied and how universally would it be adopted as the Christian watch-word and rule of faith and action. If our Savior could only have taught his disciples such a creed, and it had been continuously preserved, what wars, what schisms, what suffering, what crimes in the name of religion, what private sins as well, might have been avoided! Surely a failure to formulate such a creed would seem to have been a grave oversight on the part of the Son of God.

Some have asserted that the Bible is not a text-book of theology, but deals exclusively with practical religion; and some have even said that our Savior himself was not a theologian and that he never formulated any creed. The decidedly practical and philanthropic turn of our modern religion has tended to give such a view very favorable acceptance; yet we should bear in mind that correct principles must ever underlie and accompany correct practice. In an elementary text-book on mathematics, for example, we find the principles clearly enunciated, explained and formulated into rules; but the greater bulk of the book, by far, is often devoted to practical illustrations and examples: so, the Bible has its doctrinal portions, which are absolutely indispensable; but they are at times in considerable danger of being lost to our sight amid the greater bulk of illustrative examples.

Before commencing our search for the actual text of a creed upon which all Christians could unite—which perchance might have been formulated or at least endorsed by the Savior,—let us briefly consider what are the actual essentials of a true Christian creed. A creed is an orderly statement of all essential Christian doctrine, employed as a means of identifying true believers to one another. It must contain all that is essential, or some who are partial unbelievers may gain access to the fold. It must contain nothing non-essential, or some true child of God may thereby be excluded. The statements must be orderly, or they do not form either a creed or anything else worthy of a name. The statements must be actually used or capable of use as a shibboleth, or test, of

true Christian faith: this has been the purpose of every creed ever formulated; and this is the present employment of creeds and the cause of their present existence. It is to be noted that the purpose of a creed is to identify *believers*: not merely those who are morally upright. Since a well-grounded faith is the vehicle of our salvation, it follows necessarily that the orderly repetition of the essential grounds of our faith should result—must result—in a quickening of the spiritual life into well-rounded growth and divine activity. Thus, a perfect Christian creed must contain three elements: a full doctrinal statement, excluding non-essentials; a shibboleth, or test of personal membership in the household of faith; and a divine power resulting invariably from its thoughtful repetition.

Let us now consider some of the aspirants to the title of the "Common Creed of Christendom".

First among these is the so-called "Apostles' Creed". It is evidently an amplification of the formulation of "Peter and the [other] apostles", found in Acts 5: 29-32; and probably had its origin in nearly its present form about the close of the apostolic era. It has been in use ever since, as a test of true believers; and is used to-day by most Christian churches as a form of confession preceding baptism and admission to church membership.—Yet it contains no direct statement that Jesus Christ died to save sinners: a serious omission. Some orthodox churches now permit the omission of the clause, "He descended into hell": so it seems to contain too much. "His only Son" should also be, "His only-begotten Son"; for we also are called sons and children of God,—sons by creation and by adoption: so it is in part erroneous. Furthermore, it is so formulated as to contain no suggestion of any personal interest of the confessor beyond a credence in certain historic facts which, as St. James tells us¹, "The devils also believe, and tremble": it is not, therefore, an efficient test of a true vital believer. And most of us must confess to an almost total lack of spiritual benefit in the repetition of this creed. Plainly the "Apostles' Creed" is not worthy to be adopted as the Common Creed of Christendom.

¹ Jas. 2: 19.

The Sermon on the [Mount¹ has been named as an aspirant to be the Common Creed of Christendom. Conduct may surely be taken as a proof of true belief: but many persons confessedly not Christians endorse the Sermon on the Mount, which certainly is not an orderly statement of all essentials. And should we take Matthew's version, written for the Jews, or Luke's, written for the gentiles?

The Golden Rule² from the Sermon on the Mount, is open to the same fatal objections. It is even found, in a negative form, in heathen writings.

Our Lord's description of the Last Judgment³ provides us a test of true Christianity which he says he will there employ. But this can best be used at the end of one's life, and is surely not suitable for use as a daily pass-word among Christians: what is wanted in a creed is not so much a statement of what we desire or expect to be, as one of what we conceive God in his relations to us to be.

Our Saviour's New Commandment⁴ in the keeping of which he says⁵ all men shall know that we are his disciples, certainly presents many superior claims to being the watch-word of Christianity. True, it is not in the form of a creed; but it could easily be so formulated: for example, "I believe that a life wholly devoted to the loving of all our fellow-men as nearly as possible in the way that Jesus of Nazareth is recorded to have loved them and me, and as a consequence of his love, is the only correct rule of Christian living; and I am endeavoring so to live, by the grace of God". But what is especially wanted in every creed is still practically wanting here: a formulation of the essentials of our belief in God, a statement of trinitarian doctrine. It therefore remains to be seen if any such formulation can elsewhere be found which is in the language of inspiration and preferably spoken by the Savior himself.

All prayer is true creed. When the affiant says, "So help me

¹ Matt. 5-7 and Luke 6: 20-49.

² Matt. 7: 12.

³ Matt. 25: 31-46.

⁴ John 13: 34.

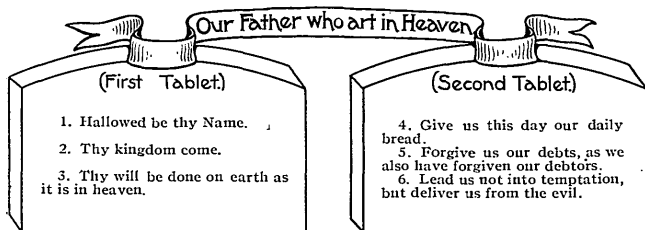
⁵ John 13: 35.

God", he affirms his belief in a God who interests himself in the affairs of this world, and who rewards truthfulness and punishes perjury. These words are also used as a test of his character and are felt to contain a divine power to keep him in the ways of truth. An atheist is never required to repeat these words, in affirmation: their use by him would actually tend to discredit his statements. Thus we see that these four words come in some respects nearer to being a perfect Christian creed than anything yet considered. But they can be employed by any theist, and are wholly lacking in any statement of distinctively Christian doctrine.

Our Savior himself has given us a prayer, which seems to contain an orderly statement of many of the elements of Christian faith. We at present call it the Lord's Prayer. Possibly this prayer may be found to fulfill enough of the requirements to make it worthy to be called a Christian creed:—

It is a remarkable coincidence that, as the Decalogue, engraved on stone by the finger of God himself, comes to us with a peculiar force and sanctity, from the Old Testament, as being the only portion thereof given to us directly from the hands of God, in his own exact words, without any human interposition,—so the Lord's Prayer, which was taught verbatim to the apostles, on several distinct occasions, and evidently was memorized by them directly from the Savior's lips, comes to us as the only passage in the New Testament which we may be absolutely sure is in the exact words as given by God (the Son) himself, without the possibility of human paraphrase.

As to its orderly arrangement: it contains an introduction, six petitions, and a doxology. The doxology, not found in the best manuscripts, is probably of somewhat later origin; and is frequently omitted. Just as the Ten Commandments divide naturally into two tablets, those of one relating to our duty to God and those of the other relating to our duty to our fellow men,—so the six petitions of this prayer divide naturally into two tablets of three petitions each; the first three, characterized by the pronoun "thy", being for God's glory and work; and the second three, characterized by the pronoun "us" or "our", being for our own personal needs. The prayer thus presents itself as follows:—



Two questions now arise: why are there just three petitions on each tablet? and is there any relation between the two tablets?—Let us see.

When we speak of “God”, we ordinarily refer to God the Father;¹ he is the possessor of the Name, the one to be preeminently honored and adored. And he it is who gives us our “daily bread” and cares for us with a father’s love through the thousand, the myriad ways of Providence. The first petition in each tablet evidently refers particularly to God the Father.

Also, it is the Son who came on earth to establish a “kingdom”, of which he was continually talking; and he it is by whose merits our sins, “debts” or “trespasses” are forgiven, after we have shown Jesus’ own spirit of forgiveness. Assuredly, the second petition on each tablet refers especially to God the Son.

And the third petitions: how much alike are they, “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven”, and “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil”. They also most assuredly belong together; and they plainly refer to the work of God the Holy Spirit, our Sanctifier.

A little further inspection will show that, in each of the couplets thus formed by reading across the tablets, the work of one Person of the Trinity is set forth, first from God’s standpoint, on the first tablet, and then from man’s standpoint, on the second tablet: parental honor and filial dependence; Messianic kingdom and sinners’ pardon; God’s millennial power and man’s millennial sanctification and redemption.

From this merely superficial examination, it appears quite plain

¹ E. g., 2 Cor. 13: 14.

that we are here in possession of a remarkably full exposition of the doctrine of the Trinity, formulated by our Savior himself, and set forth from two opposite standpoints. It is a true "credo", being an orderly statement of Christian doctrine; it is a true shibboleth, which unbelievers cannot repeat honestly; and—we are all ready to confess—it contains a supernatural power for the refreshment and upbuilding of all true believers. It is now in use by all Christian churches; and there appears to be no good reason why it might not be adopted as the universal standard of Christian faith, possibly even as the Common Creed of Christendom, the Christian rallying-cry for the twentieth and all succeeding centuries. A more detailed study will, I believe, serve to confirm these views.

If, in the further study of this "Savior's Creed", I should give expression to any opinion not in accord with the maturer views of some reader, which I sincerely trust may not be the case, my only appeal will be to the terms of this divine teaching; and my only apology will be that I am endeavoring, as a human commentator—or better, student—to find out the meaning of him who gave it to us.

First, we may note that, upon many of those religious questions which have racked Christendom to its very heart,—the apostolic succession, the primacy of Peter, forms and times of baptism, foreordination, transubstantiation, &c., &c.,—this creed is eloquently silent. O golden silence! let us respect it, and let the Babel of tongues cease!

Another thing we may observe is that, the general sense and progress of thought having become established by the preceding analysis, the meaning of each clause thenceforth becomes better fixed: some of the clauses missing in a few versions of Luke are thus found to be essential and their authenticity is practically established¹; "our daily bread" does not refer exclusively to

¹ It is a remarkable fact that the Rig-Veda, containing more than 150,000 words, which for thousands of years was exclusively perpetuated by transmission from lip to lip, contains practically no variations of text; while our New Testament, which has been transmitted in written form, contains thousands. The continuous ritual use of the Lord's Prayer, or Savior's Creed, from the time it was given until now, undoubtedly guarantees to us the correct form

spiritual bread, but to God's general providential care for us; and so on.

Let us now take up the study of these clauses in detail.

OUR FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN. The two words, "Our Father"—or, better, as in the original, "Father our"—form a kind of summary of the entire prayer, the two words corresponding to the two tablets. What a wealth of meaning resides in the one word, "Father"! What glimpses does it give us of God's unique relations to us as Creator and God; of his majesty, his authority, his providence; of his rights and his love; and of our kinship and likeness to him, notwithstanding the deformities of our nature due to sin. The word, "Our", too, speaks of God's personal relation to each of us; and of the true basis of the brotherhood of the human race. And the more truly we realize the nature of God, the more fully do we realize and accomplish the true brotherhood of humanity: all who know God the Father, learn to speak of their "brother men"; but among those who know also God the Son, there is, besides, a brotherhood of Christian fellowship, of infinitely greater depth and purity. The clause, "Who art in heaven", fixes the meaning of the first two words, and turns our thoughts from earth and earthly things into the spiritual realm. This introduction is a direct challenge to atheism, which says there is no God; to agnosticism, which says God is unknowable; to deism, which says God takes no interest in the affairs of those of this earth; to pantheism, which says that unconscious nature is God; and to polytheism, which says there are many gods to be worshiped. It at once distinguishes the true believer, and sets him in the right attitude for making the petitions which follow. It binds together the several petitions of the prayer and gives the praying soul a personal interest in his Father's and his brothers' affairs and in each and every petition; and an assurance that those things which his heavenly Father has taught him to ask he surely intends to give.

HALLOWED BE THY NAME. These words are a substantial paraphrase of the Third Commandment, "Thou shalt not take much better than the Biblical text of either Matthew or Luke. See Max Müller; also, "The Vedic System", an address before the Cosmos Club, Jersey City, N. J., Sept. 23, 1889, by James Pierson Downs, page 7; and his "Mastery of Memorizing".

the Name of Jehovah thy God in vain". We can take God's name in vain, first, by perjury, by using God's name as a vain authentication of an untruth: this is the primary meaning of the Third Commandment.¹ We can also take God's name in vain by idly, lightly, meaninglessly or even malignantly using it, as in profane swearing. We can also take the name of God in vain by cursing God himself.² But there is a broader sense in which God's name may be taken in vain, which seems to be especially referred to in the Prayer, by which both God and his name are disgraced together: God gave the Isra-EL-ites his own name, El, as a husband imparts his name to his bride³; so we are called CHRIST-ians; now any person who has assumed one or the other of these names is under obligations so to conduct himself as to bring no disgrace upon that name, as a wife or child is not to disgrace the beloved husband or parent. In this sense, the word "name" stands for the person himself⁴; and, in this Prayer, it should always be spelled with a capital. More broadly still, all people are under continual obligations to behave reverently towards God and to give him gratitude for his continual care over them: thus they hallow God's Name. This is the basis of all religion, the ground of all morality, and a practical summary of the Commandments.

The right to make this petition involves the duty of ourselves worshiping God in spirit and in sincerity⁵ not in empty forms⁶ thus, this petition teaches us that worship is a need of the human soul; with a suggestion that atheism is both a form of disease and a producer of further disease. This petition is the basis of missionary effort, which becomes confirmed and strengthened by the other petitions of the first tablet.

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD. Our physical needs are considered first on the second tablet, not primarily as a concession to our human frailties but because the care for them falls especially to the First Person of the Trinity. This is also, however, their natural order⁷; for, even before the soul's awaken-

¹ Compare Matt. 5: 33-37.

² Compare Job 2: 9.

³ Compare Isa. 61: 10-62:5; and Hos. 2.

⁴ Compare Deut. 16: 6.

⁵ John 4: 24.

⁶ Matt. 6: 7; John 6: 63.

⁷ 1 Cor. 15: 46.

ing, our bodies are continually in need of God's daily grace and providential care. Thus, many successful Christian missionaries, following the Savior's example, have begun their work by ministering to bodily wants: the Savior's Creed is no "gospel on an empty stomach". The prayer for our daily bread necessarily implies prayer for ability to eat and digest it; and for safety, opportunity and guidance for the employment of the strength thus acquired. It thus practically involves all of God's providential care over us; and should always be so understood and interpreted.

"Back of the loaf is the snowy flour;
And, back of the flour, the mill;
And back of the mill is the wheat, and the shower,
And the sun,—and the Father's will"¹

The word "day" is freely employed, throughout the Bible, to represent periods longer than that of twenty-four hours; and it should certainly not be so limited here as to forbid us to pray to God to assist us to the finish in present undertakings extending indefinitely into the future. But this petition especially warrants us in a continual dependency upon God's loving care, extending from moment to moment. While simplicity in living is evidently commended to us, neither improvidence nor luxuriousness is at all warranted, here; but, especially by effect of the pronouns "us", "our", which hint that the supplies sent are not for "me", nor their use to be narrowed to "my" horizon, there is suggested a thoughtful consideration of rich for poor and of poor for rich, such as God has shown to us; as well as of honest toil² for our daily bread, in carrying out God's declared method of providing us therewith. Continual failure of our efforts at support of self and dependants is no warrant for relaxation of effort, but should be only a spur to more earnest and prayerful effort.

These two petitions present two sides of one great truth: divine rights and human needs, our filial love and gratitude to God and his parental love to us.³ When taken together, they show both the impotence of communism or bare philanthropy, on the one

¹ Maltbie Davenport Babcock, *Thoughts for Every Day Living*, p. 167

² Gen. 3: 19.

³ Compare Psalms 103: 19 and 13.

hand, or of ecclesiasticism, on the other; and also the proper place and relation of these to one another.

THY KINGDOM COME. It is a remarkable fact that, while our Savior is recorded to have used the word "church" only twice, he was continually talking of the "kingdom" which he had come to establish. He has compared this kingdom to various kinds of soil receiving seed;¹ to the natural germination and growth of seed;² to the remarkable visible growth of mustard;³ or the more remarkable invisible growth of yeast;⁴ to wheat growing with mingled tares;⁵ to a treasure hid in a field;⁶ to a pearl for which a man sold all he had;⁷ to a net catching all kinds of fish;⁸ to wise and foolish bridesmaids;⁹ to a farmer giving a gratuity to his laborers;¹⁰ to cases of stewardship;¹¹ to a wedding feast;¹² and so forth. Many other parables, in connection with which the word "kingdom" does not directly occur,—as the parables of the prodigal son,¹³ the big and little debtors,¹⁴ the good Samaritan,¹⁵ and very many others,—are also evidently parables of the kingdom. Much of Jesus' preaching, personally and through his disciples, was the "glad tidings of the kingdom";¹⁶ whose mysteries he revealed only to his disciples;¹⁷ it was to come on earth,¹⁸ soon, with power,¹⁹ and convulsions;²⁰ to be not of this earth,²¹ but

¹ Matt. 13: 3-23, especially 11, = Mark 4: 3-20, especially 11, = Luke 8: 5-15, especially 10.

² Mark 4: 26-29.

³ Matt. 13: 31-32 = Mark 4: 30-32; Luke 13: 18-19.

⁴ Matt. 13: 33; Luke 13: 20-21.

⁵ Matt. 13: 24-30 and 36-43.

⁶ Matt. 13: 44.

⁷ Matt. 13: 45-46.

⁸ Matt. 13: 47-50.

⁹ Matt. 25: 1-13.

¹⁰ Matt. 20: 1-16.

¹¹ Matt. 18: 21-35; 25: 14-30; Luke 19: 11-27; and Matt. 21: 33-46 = Mark 12: 1-12 = Luke 20: 9-19.

¹² Matt. 22: 2-14.

¹³ Luke 15: 11-32.

¹⁴ Luke 7: 40-43; compare Matt. 18: 21-35, above.

¹⁵ Luke 10: 30-37.

¹⁶ Luke 8: 1; 9: 1 and 2; 10: 1-9.

¹⁷ Mark 4: 11.

¹⁸ Matt. 12: 28.

¹⁹ Mark 9: 1.

²⁰ Luke 21: 5-31.

²¹ John 18: 36.

within us.¹ It had been promised to the Jews, but lost;² and those that do iniquity are to be taken out of it;³ riches are an obstacle;⁴ child-like humility is an advantage;⁵ repentance admits;⁶ and discreetness helps;⁷ pharisaical righteousness is insufficient;⁸ it is worth maiming oneself to get in;⁹ the unforgiving will be rejected;¹⁰ the new birth is absolutely prerequisite;¹¹ and it is to be sought first of all.¹² It is our reward in heaven,¹³ consummated there with great joy.¹⁴ Satan also has his kingdom, on earth.¹⁵

This kingdom had been the subject of prophecy for ages.¹⁶

Jesus himself is to be the king.¹⁷

Except as it is directly related to the words of the Savior's Creed, an extended study of the subject, "The Kingdom of Heaven", would evidently occupy more time and space than is herein warranted. But this much is plain:—God is establishing a kingdom. Jesus is king. We are taught to pray for the success of the kingdom. To make such a prayer presupposes a desire on our part; and this desire can be measured in terms of our readiness to work and sacrifice therefor. No one has a right to make this prayer who does not contribute for the furtherance of God's work at home and abroad. Every true subject of the King should be ready and proud at all times to acknowledge his own vassalage and to do or die for his Liege. He has no more right to trifle with the sinful

¹ Luke 17: 21.

² Matt. 8: 12; 21: 43.

³ Matt. 13: 41.

⁴ Matt. 19: 24.

⁵ Matt. 18: 4.

⁶ Matt. 21: 31.

⁷ Mark 12: 34.

⁸ Matt. 5: 20.

⁹ Mark 9: 47; compare Matt. 18: 1, 7-9; 5: 29-30.

¹⁰ Matt. 18: 23-35.

¹¹ John 3: 3 and 5.

¹² Matt. 6: 33.

¹³ Matt. 25: 34.

¹⁴ Matt. 26: 29.

¹⁵ Matt. 12: 26.

¹⁶ See Exod. 19: 6; 1 Chron. 29: 11; Psalms 22: 28; Dan. 2: 44; 7: 14, 22, 27; Obad. 21;—Psalms 2: 6; 24: 7-10; 47: 72; Isa. 9: 1-7; 11 and 12; 32: 1; Jer 23: 5; Zech. 9: 9; 14: 9; and numerous other passages.

¹⁷ Matt. 21: 4-5; John 18: 33-37; 19: 14-22; Psalms 2: &c., &c.

powers of this world than a private soldier has to hold communications with the enemy.

FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS, AS WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS. The word "debts" is a more literal translation than "trespasses"; but the emphasis is on "forgive", so the sense is identical. The comma after "debts" rightly indicates the meaning of "as" to be the same as "for", rather than, as generally understood, "like": we come into the presence of God, asking for full and free forgiveness on the one and only personal ground that we have fully and freely forgiven all who have wronged us. Our Savior's commentary, which immediately¹ follows this prayer, is, "For, if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but, if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses". Jesus also gives a further commentary, later, in the parable of the unforgiving debtor;² which should be read in full at this point: the debts in question amounted to about twelve million dollars, and seventeen dollars, respectively. An unforgiving spirit is itself sin, unfitting us for pardon and for admission to God's kingdom; and, "If we refuse to forgive the second time because it is the second time, the first time is evidently not forgotten". A truly forgiving spirit is a Christlike spirit, and fits us to be members of Christ's commonwealth. True forgiveness is at least very closely allied to love, and is one of the simplest and most practical forms or evidences thereof. As Paul says,³ "Love beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things". Going but a step farther, and I believe all logically implied in the words of the Savior's Creed, we come to his parting charge,⁴ "A new commandment I give unto you: that ye love one another;—even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples: if ye have love one to another". It is my firm conviction that loving forgiveness of those about us "for Jesus' sake" is the essence and very nearly the sum-total of what is called "saving faith";⁵ and that, without this, we have no right to add to any prayer of ours the words, "for Christ's sake".

¹ Matt. 6: 14-15.

² Matt. 18: 21-35.

³ 1 Cor. 13: 7.

⁴ John 13: 34-35.

⁵ Matt. 6: 14-15; John 13: 34-35.

God has taught us to ask for pardon and to profess to him a forgiving spirit: since our heavenly Father would not teach us to ask for what he did not intend to give, it is our privilege and duty to believe that our sins are pardoned, if we have forgiven others, and to expect that God will give us the grace to be truly forgiving.

THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS DONE IN HEAVEN. This is surely one of the hardest prayers on earth, to make. Think how the angels in heaven execute God's will: they have absolutely no personal desires, except to carry out his plans. All nature, too, perfectly obeys the will of God. Even God the Son¹ and the Holy Spirit² do not their own will but the Father's. Man alone can defy his authority and refuse to obey his commands or heed his entreaties.³ Even then, God makes the wrath of man to praise him;⁴ so that, except as to the disobedient man's personal welfare, God's plans are not at all thwarted or his will violated. Again and again, Jesus insists that it is not those who hear the Word⁵ or acknowledge his lordship⁶ or promise,⁷ or sacrifice⁸ who please God, but those who obey his will; and whoever does this he calls his "brother and sister and mother".⁹ Paul calls himself "An apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God";¹⁰ and John¹¹ says, "He that doeth the will of God *abideth for ever*". The Psalmist prays "Teach me to do thy will".¹² See, also, Peter's tribute.¹³ An honest purpose to do God's will is the way to prove to oneself the truth of the gospel.¹⁴

This petition is a prayer, for myself and for every other human

¹ John 5: 30; 6: 38; Rom. 15: 3; and compare Heb. 10: 7; Isa. 53: 10.

² John 16: 13.

³ Ezek. 33: 11; Matt. 18: 12-14.

⁴ Psal. 76: 10.

⁵ Matt. 7: 24-27.

⁶ Matt. 7: 21-23.

⁷ Matt. 21: 28-31.

⁸ Matt. 9: 13; compare Hos. 6: 6; Psal. 40: 6-8; 51: 16; Isa. 1: 10-20.

⁹ Matt. 12: 50 = Mark 3: 35 = Luke 8: 21.

¹⁰ 2 Cor. 1: 1; Eph. 1: 1; Col. 1: 1; 2 Tim. 1: 1; and see, also, Gal. 1: 4; Eph. 1: 3-14; 5: 17; 6: 6-7; Php. 2: 13; Col. 1: 9-11; 4: 12; 1 Thes. 4: 3; Heb. 10: 10.

¹¹ 1 John 2: 17.

¹² Psal. 143: 10; 40: 8.

¹³ 1 Pet. 2: 15; 4: 2.

¹⁴ John 7: 17.

being; negatively, for freedom from sinning of every kind; and, positively, that each of us may do his part in the accomplishment of God's plans. It is a prayer for submission, such as Jesus's in Gethsemane;¹ for endurance and faith in affliction, sorrow, disappointment, suffering, and all other trials. It is a prayer for faithfulness and zeal in toiling like a bond-servant,² though free, to do the Master's work; for absolute surrender of time, money, friends, desires, self, to God, in order to the speediest and most graceful accomplishment of his will. It is a prayer for the furtherance of all philanthropic work, municipal reform, improved morality, &c.; for all these are surely his will. And, if we so do and live, this will strengthen and nourish us, day by day and hour by hour; for, "Man shall not live by bread (fourth petition) alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God".³ The Savior sat down weary by Jacob's well,⁴ too weary to proceed into town; but, after half an hour spent in "fishing", to "take alive" that Samaritan woman, he refused the food offered by his returned disciples, saying, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me and to accomplish his work": the spiritual food is in the third petition: the physical in the fourth.

And notice, too, the universality of this prayer: we pray that God's name may be hallowed—without naming the perfectness of the adoration or the number of men to be so affected; the same applies to our prayer for Christ's kingdom;—but in this third petition we are taught in express terms to disclaim all limitation of extent (on earth) and of quality (as in heaven); we are to pray for a world-wide and absolutely complete and perfect conformity of all terrestrial creation to the will of God.⁵ . . . And the implication seems to be,—as warranted, too, by the facts,—that the Fatherhood of God and the kingdom of Christ will never be fully realized on earth until the indwelling Spirit comes in his fullness. John Watson (Ian Maclaren)⁶ says, "From time to time, a fresh

¹ Matt. 26: 39, 42 and 44.

² Luke 17: 10.

³ Deut. 8: 3 and Matt. 4: 4.

⁴ John 4.

⁵ "A Holy Ghost man never bounds his own effort by narrow limits, or by any limits." A. T. Pierson, "How Christ Came to Church" pt. III, III, 118.

⁶ The Mind of the Master, ch. 15, pp. 317-318. See, also, ch. 12, pp. 264-265, where he says: "One is not astonished that some of Jesus's deepest say-

discovery is made in Jesus's teaching. As a stranger, unfettered by tradition, will detect in a private gallery some masterpiece generations have overlooked, so an unbiased mind will rescue from neglecting ages some idea of the Master. Two finds have been made within recent years: the Divine Fatherhood and the Kingdom of God." A careful study of this Savior's Creed will convince us that one more discovery remains to be practically made: the extent and power of the work of the Holy Spirit.¹

As it is through the agency of the Holy Spirit that we are enabled to do God's will, a short array of Scripture texts thereon may not be out of order at this place:—

Our Savior's comparison of the Holy Spirit to the wind,² on account of the mysteriousness of his operations and our ignorance of his laws, seems as applicable now as then: also, praise God, his comparison with refreshing and reviving water.³ The Spirit is an earnest, or part-payment, of our inheritance,⁴ and his ministration is "glorious"⁵.—The Spirit is opposed to temporal might and power;⁶ but gives manual skill⁷ and physical strength and prowess;⁸ he fits for rulership.⁹ He kindles righteous anger;¹⁰ and, through Paul, punishes a sorcerer.¹¹ In the case of Balaam,¹²

ings are still unfathomed, or that some of his widest principles are not yet applied. Jesus is the Eternal Son, and the ages overtake him slowly. One is aghast to discover that the doctrine [of the Fatherhood of God] which Jesus put in the forefront of his teaching and labored at with such earnestness did not leave a trace on the dominant theology of the early Church, and for long centuries passed out of the Christian consciousness. Had it not been for the Lord's Prayer and, in a sense, the three Creeds, no witness had been left for the Fatherhood in Christian doctrine and worship."

¹ In this connection, reference should be made, among numerous other books, to Freemantle's "The World as the Subject of Redemption."

² John 3: 8.

³ John 4: 14; 7: 37-39.

⁴ Eph. 1: 13 and 14; 2 Cor. 1: 22; 5: 5.

⁵ 2 Cor. 3: 8.

⁶ Zech. 4: 6.

⁷ Exod. 31: 3 and 35: 31.

⁸ Samson, Jud. 13: 25; 14: 6 and 19; 15: 14.

⁹ Joshua, Num. 27: 18; Othniel, Jud. 3: 10; Gideon, 6: 34; Jephtha, 11: 29; seventy elders, Num. 11: 24-29, Isa. 63: 11; Stephen and other deacons, Acts 6: 3; compare, also, Joseph, Gen. 41: 38.

¹⁰ Saul, 1 Sam. 11: 6.

¹¹ Acts 13: 9; compare with Peter, Acts 5: 1-11, where the Spirit is not, however, named as acting.

¹² Num. 24: 2; see, also, 23: 5 and 16.

he compels unwilling prophecy; which also seems to have been the case with some of the seventy elders,¹ and with Saul and his messengers.²—The Holy Spirit was, in some mysterious way, Jesus's parent on earth;³ and "descended upon him" at baptism;⁴ "anointed" him;⁵ and was "upon" him.⁶ Jesus, by the Holy Spirit, cast out demons.⁷—The Holy Spirit invites the unsaved;⁸ testifies of Jesus⁹ and glorifies him;¹⁰ the Bible is his sword, the Christian's only weapon of attack;¹¹ he convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment¹², and witnesses to the world;¹³ he is resisted by the wicked¹⁴ and will not always strive with men;¹⁵ he is grieved, by (specified) sins¹⁶, but pleased with the kind, tender-hearted and forgiving;¹⁷ he may be "quenched"¹⁸ and departs after sin (*Saul*);¹⁹ to lie to him is a very serious offense (*Ananias*)²⁰ and to "blaspheme" against him is unpardonable;²¹ when alienated, he fights against his people.²²—John the Baptist was "Filled with the Holy Spirit" from the time of his birth;²³ Cornelius and his family "were filled" before baptism;²⁴ Paul received restoration of sight, baptism and the Holy Spirit at practically the same

¹ Num. 11: 26.

² 1 Sam. 19: 20-24; see, also, 10: 6-10.

³ Matt. 1: 18-20; Luke 1: 35; compare the Apostles' Creed.

⁴ Matt. 3: 16 = Mark 1: 10 = Luke 3: 22 = John 1: 32.

⁵ Acts 10: 38.

⁶ Isa. 42: 1; 61: 1;—quoted Matt. 12: 18 and Luke 4: 18.

⁷ Matt. 12: 28.

⁸ Rev. 22: 17.

⁹ John 15: 26; compare Heb. 2: 4.

¹⁰ John 16: 14.

¹¹ Eph. 6: 17.

¹² John 16: 8.

¹³ Acts 5: 32, compare John 5: 37.

¹⁴ Acts 7: 51.

¹⁵ Gen. 6: 3.

¹⁶ Eph. 4: 25-31.

¹⁷ Verse 32; compare the fifth petition, "As we forgive them that trespass against us".

¹⁸ 1 Thes. 5: 19.

¹⁹ 1 Sam. 16: 14.

²⁰ Acts 5: 3 and 9.

²¹ Mat. 12: 31-2 = Mark 3: 29; compare Heb. 6: 4-6 and 10: 29.

²² Isa. 63: 10-14.

²³ Luke 1: 15.

²⁴ Acts 10: 44-47.

time, by the touch of Ananias;¹ some Samaritans, long after baptism, received the Holy Spirit through the prayers and touch of Peter and John;² David, as a boy, received the Holy Spirit after unction;³ and the apostles received the Holy Spirit, probably during prayer, at Pentecost,⁴ nearly two months after Jesus had breathed on them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit";⁵ in the case of many others, the reception of the Holy Spirit is not stated, though apparent, as Isaiah;⁶ and, in the vast majority of cases, we have no record as to the time or circumstances of his coming.—The Holy Spirit sometimes "drives" or even "carries" people on his errands;⁷ he sets apart and sends forth his servants;⁸ appoints bishops;⁹ advises of danger;¹⁰ forbids a course;¹¹ prepares his servants for a coming event;¹² prepares both preacher and hearer of the gospel;¹³ gives supernatural perception¹⁴ and visions;¹⁵ reveals the future¹⁶ and the "deep things of God;"¹⁷ instructs¹⁸ and reminds;¹⁹ explains²⁰ and guides into all truth by a power not original with God's servants;²¹ he gives witnessing power to his disciples²²

¹ Acts 9: 17-19.

² Acts 8: 14-17.

³ 1 Sam. 16: 13.

⁴ Acts 1: 14; 2: 1-4.

⁵ John 20: 22.

⁶ Isa. 6: 1-10; but see Acts 28: 25.

⁷ Ezek. 3: 14 and 24; 8: 3; 11: 1, 24; 37: 1; 43: 5; Matt. 4: 1 = Mark 1: 12 = Luke 4: 1; Acts 8: 39-40; Rev. 17: 3; compare Satan's carrying power, Matt. 4: 5 and 8, somewhat toned down by the Evangelist to the gentiles, Luke 4: 5 and 9.

⁸ Acts 13: 2 and 4; 8: 29; 11: 12; Isa. 48: 16.

⁹ Acts 20: 28.

¹⁰ Acts 21: 4; compare 20: 23; 21: 11.

¹¹ Acts 16: 6-7.

¹² Acts 10: 19; in 2 Ki. 4: 27, he withheld the information.

¹³ 1 Peter 1: 12; 1 Thes. 1: 5-6.

¹⁴ Luke 1: 41-2.

¹⁵ Ezek. 3: 12 and often; Acts 7: 55.

¹⁶ Often in the Old Testament; Luke 2: 26; John 16: 13; Acts 11: 28;

1 Peter 1: 11; Rev. 4: 1 and 2.

¹⁷ 1 Cor. 2: 9-10.

¹⁸ Nch. 9: 20

¹⁹ John 14: 26.

²⁰ Eph. 3: 5 and 6.

²¹ John 16: 13.

²² Matt. 10: 20; Mark 13: 11; Luke 12: 11-12; Acts 1: 8; fulfilled Acts 4: 8 and 31; &c.

and speaks and acts characteristically through them;¹ he writes to churches,² inspires the Scriptures³ and gives psalmody.⁴ The Holy Spirit gives wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, fear of God, delight in the fear of God, equity and power to punish;⁵ and, again, wisdom, knowledge, faith, healings, miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, tongues, interpretation,—making apostles, prophets, teachers, miracle-workers, healers, helpers, rulers, linguists;⁶ of which gifts “prophecy”, here defined as public speaking, is the most desirable.⁷ On one occasion, the power to forgive sins was given by Jesus along with the gift of the Holy Spirit.⁸ On this, it is to be noted that Thomas was absent and there is no record that the power was ever subsequently in terms imparted to him; that Cleopas was present;⁹ and that the Holy Spirit, although then given, did not come until Pentecost, nearly two months later; also that, on another, earlier occasion,¹⁰ all the disciples being present, Jesus seems to have given this power to Peter only; and, a little later,¹¹ he seems to give or promise it to church congregations generally. The Holy Spirit is to introduce Messianic and millennial times of joy and peace;¹² Jesus was to baptize with the Holy Spirit,¹³ having himself so promised;¹⁴ this was fulfilled in the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost,¹⁵ repeated a little later,¹⁶ and still later given to Cornelius and his family;¹⁷ being “poured from on high”.¹⁸ The book called “The Acts of the Apostles” would, as has been suggested, be better called “The Acts of the Holy Spirit”, for practically every apostolic act therein detailed was evidently under his operation; Paul gives us¹⁹ the War of the Holy Spirit against the natural or un-

¹ Isa. 61: 1; 2 Chr. 24: 20; Ezek. 11: 5; Heb. 10: 15; &c.

² Rev. 2: 7, 11, 17, 29.

³ 1 Cor. 2: 13; 2 Pet. 1: 21; Heb. 9: 8.

⁴ 2 Sam. 23: 2; Mark 12: 36; Luke 1: 67; Acts 1: 16; Heb. 3: 7.

⁵ Isa. 11: 2-5.

⁶ 1 Cor. 12.

⁷ 1 Cor. 14: 1-19.

⁸ John 20: 23.

⁹ Luke 24: 33.

¹⁰ Matt. 16: 17-19.

¹¹ Matt. 18: 18.

¹² Isa. 32: 15-18, compare 44: 3; Ezek. 36: 27; Joel 2: 28-32, applied to Pentecost, Acts 2: 17.

¹³ Matt. 3: 11 = Mark 1: 8 = Luke 3: 16 = John 1: 33.

¹⁴ Acts 1: 5 and 8.

¹⁵ Acts 2: 4.

¹⁶ Acts 4: 31.

¹⁷ Acts 10: 44; 11: 15; 15: 8.

¹⁸ Isa. 32: 15; 44: 3; Tit. 3: 5 and 6.

¹⁹ Rom. 8: 1-27; 1 Cor. 2: 9-16; Gal. 5: 16-25; 6: 7-8; compare Jude 19.

spiritual creature; and the Savior, in his talk with Nicodemus,¹ gives us the Generation of the Holy Spirit, and, in his final talk with his disciples,² the Apocalypse of the Holy Spirit.

When Jesus took his bodily form from this world, we would have been "orphans" indeed,³ but for the Holy Spirit; who took Jesus's place,⁴ invisible to the world,⁴ first "with" and later "in" his disciples;⁵ our bodies are his temples;⁶ he is received by faith,⁷ after repentance and acceptance of Jesus;⁸ given to all who ask;⁹ we are saved "Through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit";¹⁰ who helps our infirmities,¹¹ guarding the good that is in us;¹² he is the agent of the new birth,¹³ transforming us by reflection or imitation,¹⁴ "sanctifying" us, or setting us apart for God¹⁵ and giving us the "love of God",¹⁶ freeing us from the law of sin and death.¹⁷ He is his own proof,¹⁸ witnessing to us of our new birth and adoption;¹⁹ he is living and life-giving,²⁰ giving us "fellowship of the spirit";²¹ and his "fruit" is "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, power-within",²² "in all goodness and righteousness and truth";²³ and God will give us, "according to the riches of his glory", power-within, indwelling-Christ, love-rootedness, and apprehension of the fulness of the love of Christ, "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think".²⁴

Besides these and other passages in which the Holy Spirit is directly mentioned, we will find a very large number of passages where, owing to a form of expression which is perhaps not strictly scientific, we have to reason towards the real meaning of the passage and its application to the work of the Holy Spirit. For example, in Jesus's final talk with his faithful apostles, just before

¹ John 3: 3-12.

³ So the Greek, John 14: 18.

⁵ John 14: 17.

⁷ Gal. 3: 2.

⁹ Luke 11: 13.

¹¹ Rom. 8: 26.

¹³ John 3: 5 and 6.

¹⁵ Rom. 15: 16; 1 Pet. 1: 2.

¹⁷ Rom. 8: 2.

¹⁹ Rom. 8: 15-17; Gal. 4: 6: 1 John 3: 24; 4: 13.

²⁰ John 14: 19.

²² Gal. 5: 22-3.

²⁴ Eph. 3: 14-20.

² John 14-17.

⁴ John 14: 15-24; 16: 7.

⁶ 1 Cor. 3: 16-17; 6: 19; Eph. 2: 22.

⁸ Acts 2: 38

¹⁰ Tit. 3: 5.

¹² 2 Tim. 1: 14.

¹⁴ 2 Cor. 3: 18.

¹⁶ Rom. 5: 5.

¹⁸ Job 27: 3.

²¹ Php. 2: 1.

²³ Eph. 5: 9, A. V.

his crucifixion, he said to them,¹ "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Guardian,² that he may be with you for ever,—the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, for it beholdeth him not neither knoweth him. Ye know him, for he is abiding with you and shall be in you. I will not send you forth orphans³ I am coming to you. Yet a little while and the world will be seeing me no more: but ye will be seeing me". Here, Jesus is evidently speaking all the time of the coming of the Holy Spirit; yet he says, "I", "me". So Christians frequently speak of the "indwelling Christ",⁴ when a strictly accurate form of expression would prefer the words, "the Holy Spirit". The Three are One; but, when we are studying the Trinity, these mixed expressions are liable to lead us astray. For another example, we may easily see that, while the growth of the kingdom of God may well be compared to the rapid and patent growth of the mustard plant, the silent and unseen growth of yeast would better be taken to refer to the progress of the Holy Spirit in the world. Still again, Isaiah,⁵ in speaking of his call to the ministry, does not refer it to the Holy Spirit; and we would only have had our reason to guide us in the matter, had not Paul set the matter at rest by telling us it was the Holy Spirit's work.⁶ Now, the Savior's Creed makes these distinctions very clear; and, using it as a cue, or key, we will be able slowly to unravel many of the difficulties found elsewhere in the Bible.

It seems quite probable that the gift of "prophecy" is really a gift of much lower order than heart-purity; for the former often went to persons far from perfect, as Balaam, Saul, Saul's messengers, Jonah, Caiaphas,⁷ &c., and even through "an evil spirit from God;"⁸ and we know that, at the present day, it is much easier to get the "shouting religion" and to "speak in meeting" than it is to live a spiritual life. This being so, none of us need feel that the power of the highest and best "prophecy" is *above* him, but only that it will come or go, upon him or others, as God sees best; and that, as he has been taught to pray, his privilege is to seek and his duty to expect the *very highest and hardest* work of the Holy Spirit

¹ John 14: 16-19.

³ [So the Greek].

⁵ Isa. 6.

⁷ John 11: 49-52.

² See "orphans", below.

⁴ Compare Eph. 3: 17.

⁶ Acts 28: 25.

⁸ 1 Sam. 18: 10.

to be wrought in him, even heart-purity and the indwelling Presence of God.

LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION BUT DELIVER US FROM THE EVIL. The strong adversative conjunction *ἀλλὰ*, "but", binds these two clauses together and makes the petitions one: if the Prayer contained seven coördinate clauses,—instead of "but" we should have had the same conjunction as that used before, "and" (*καί*); and, if these two clauses meant that the leading into temptation and the deliverance from evil were two different things and not practical opposites of the same thing, we should probably have had in the Greek the often untranslatable particles, *μὲν* and *δὲ*.

We are taught to pray for a double deliverance from temptation: that we may not come into temptation; and that, if we are tempted, we may not yield. It is therefore our duty not only to refrain from sinning, but also, although temptation is not sin, to keep ourselves away from the opportunities of sinning and to put ourselves in the way of the best spiritual surroundings. For example, it is the duty of every one who prays this prayer to attend public divine worship, to partake of the communion, daily to read the Bible with prayer, to engage in such vocations and avocations as will react for his own spiritual good, to avoid contact with immoral influences that are not strictly in the line of his duty, and to surround himself with the best of literature and with such an atmosphere of prayer as may be most nearly impenetrable to the darts of the adversary.¹ The Greek word (*πειρασμῶν*) translated "temptation" equally means trials or affliction; and these we are not to seek. There is no ground for bravado in our religious life; even the Savior himself prayed that the cup of trial might pass, if the Father were willing; and we should not be more bold than he.

From this we may reason that every trial or "proof", be it suffering or temptation to sin, which God permits to come upon us—and what God permits he sends,—that trial must be necessary to our best spiritual welfare and must therefore be accompanied by the means of deliverance and growth.² Mountain-top trees often have the toughest fiber; but those that grow in the sheltering valleys are the straightest and tallest; God knows and sends what is best.

¹ Compare Eph. 6: 10-20.

² 1 Cor. 10: 13.

We are taught to pray for deliverance from evil: it is our duty to expect that our prayers will be answered; therefore, to expect that we shall be delivered. As to the infinitesimal question as to whether anybody ever was or will be so perfectly sanctified in this world as never again to sin or even be able to sin in the minutest particular,—that is none of our affair, and the discussion thereof has been used by many as a warrant for making easy terms with sin. I am inclined to think that many of the Bible texts used on both sides of this question have been wrested from their proper meaning; but the matter is very clearly set forth in this prayer, and we will be safe in using it as a guide. As sidelights: the Christians are frequently spoken of as “saints” (*ἁγιοί*), or holy ones;¹ Jesus says, “Be ye perfect”, or “Ye shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect”;² Jude says,³ God is “able to guard us from stumbling”; but, after being “perfect”, we are still to “stretch forward”;⁴ In Heb. 4:16, “mercy” represents the fifth petition; “grace to help”, the sixth; see, also, 1 Jno. 1:9. So, we sing,

“Let the water and the blood,
From thy riven side which flowed
Be of sin the double cure:
Save me from its guilt and power”.

Guilt, fifth petition; power, sixth.

The prayer for deliverance from evil is no more limited to fulfilment only after death than that for our daily bread or any other petition: all are unfulfilled for to-morrow, all may be fulfilled for to-day.

It will be noted that our relations to our fellow-men are principally derived from the petitions of the first tablet: so, in fact, our civil and religious relations to others arise especially in view of God's sovereignty. Duty to man cannot well be defined without reference to God.

Of the six petitions, it may be noted that God is not asked to hallow his own name, bring his kingdom or execute his will, the

¹ E. g., Eph. 1:1; 1 Cor. 16:1.

² Matt. 5:48.

³ V. 24.

⁴ Php. 3:13-16.

passive voice being practically used throughout the first tablet, which represents our duty to God, and which prayers it rests upon us—with God's grace—to answer; while, on the other hand, in the second tablet, it is always God who is acting—providing, forgiving or delivering—while our part appears to be passive. There is no, "God helps him who helps himself", here; but, "Seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you".¹

This prayer is a unit. The Savior has given no authority whatever for praying one part and omitting another or for expecting an answer to one part and not to another. If, having learned this prayer, we pray for and expect God's providential care over us, and believe that we have received it, it becomes our duty to forgive others and to pray for, expect and believe that we have received forgiveness from God for our offenses against our King; and it is also our further duty to pray for full deliverance from the power of temptation, to believe that every victory is a direct answer to this prayer, and fully to expect a complete sanctification: that—as we hallow God's name and acknowledge his regal authority over us—we may do his will *on earth* as it is done in heaven. God meant to answer every part of this prayer, or he would not have taught us to pray it:² immediately after teaching his disciples this prayer,³ our Savior emphasizes this very point by the parables of the importunate neighbor and the son asking food; and says, "Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you;—for *every one* that asketh receiveth; and that seeketh findeth; and that knocketh, to him it shall be opened. If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"⁴ Elsewhere, he gives us his pledge of sincerity, "Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me. . . . If it were not so, I would have told you"⁵. Let us believe God, let us

¹ Matt. 6: 33.

² "Would God, who thus opens the hearts of men, shut his own?" John Calvin.

³ Luke 11: 1-4.

⁴ Luke 11: 9, 10, 13.

⁵ John 14: 1 and 2.

believe his Christ, and let us live in the fulness of this wonderful Creed and Prayer.

As we gaze upon its sublime heights and depths, considering it merely in its most superficial senses, we can readily see why the early Christians, on repeating it, felt the need of a concluding doxology, and added the words, "FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER AND THE GLORY, FOR EVER". The word, "kingdom", may be an echo from the first tablet; "power" from the second tablet and "glory" a combination and summing up of the whole, in man's best and loftiest phraseology. And, in heaven, our hearts will gladly prolong the sound, as we cast our crowns before the throne of God and say, "Worthy art thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power: for thou didst create all things. . . . Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor and power, and might be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen."¹

Having now concluded our somewhat brief and scattering study of the details of this great Creed, we may proceed, if we desire, to reconstruct therefrom a skeleton of systematic theology, somewhat as follows:—

SPECIFIC THEOLOGY. Under this head, the Savior's Creed declares that there is one God, in heaven, who has taught us to call him Father; and that this one God has three different manifestations, which we ordinarily call "Persons", as indicated by the three pairs of petitions. That the First Person bears the Name, preëminently, and is to be supremely adored; and that his principal objective relation to man is through what we ordinarily call Providence, or the care for our bodily wants. That the Second Person is God as he came on earth to re-establish the old broken theocracy, which had been the burden of prophecy; and who, by his spirit of forgiveness and love, has shown us the prerequisite to our own forgiveness and reconciliation with God. That the Third Person is God as he comes fully to reconcile man to God, enabling man perfectly to do God's will; and that he thus destroys the power of temptation, delivering us from evil—or from the "evil one". If the reading, "From the evil one" is accepted as correct beyond question, we also have the doctrine taught of a personal devil, whose work principally

¹ Rev. 4:11 and 7:12

consists in opposing the operation of the Holy Spirit, and who is finally to be overcome by the Holy Spirit.

Other Scriptural authority on the Trinity is found, in the New Testament; in the Christ-given baptismal formula;¹ in the apostolic benediction;² in the allusions of Peter³ and Jude;⁴ and in the appearance at Jesus's baptism.⁵ In the Old Testament, the authority is not so clear; but, looking back with the New Testament light, ample and convincing: we have the plural (not dual, it must refer to at least three) form of the word, "*God*", *Elohim*, used with a singular verb and both singular and plural pronouns;⁶ we have the sacred number, three,⁷ used to represent God, and combined with four, which represents creation and the creature, man,⁸ by addition, to make seven,⁹ the numbers three and four standing over against each other without mingling, probably representing the Old Covenant, and by multiplication to make twelve, where the threes are four and the fours are three, $\begin{smallmatrix} \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\ \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\ \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \end{smallmatrix}$,¹⁰ probably representing Christ, the God-man, and the New Covenant; we have the Mosaic benediction,¹¹ where Jehovah is asked (1) to keep or guard us, (2) to be gracious or compassionate to us, and (3) to give us peace, generally following the work of the Three Persons in the Godhead; and we have the furniture of the Tabernacle.¹² A person, on entering the Holy Place, would see, on his right, (the Hebrews read from right to left) a table of bread; in front, an altar of incense, standing outside the veil, just between him and the mercy-seat; and on his left, a seven-

¹ Matt. 28: 19.

² 2 Cor. 13: 14.

³ 1 Pet. 1: 1-2.

⁴ Jude 20 and 21.

⁵ Matt. 3: 16-17 = Mark 1: 10-11 = Luke 3: 22; compare John 1: 32-34

⁶ Gen. 1: 26-27; &c.

⁷ Gen. 18: 2; Isa. 6: 3; &c.; compare Rev. 4: 8, &c.

⁸ Gen. 2: 10; Ezek. 1: 5; 37: 9; compare Rev. 4: 6; 7: 1; 21: 16.

⁹ Gen. 2: 3; Exod. 20: 11; 25: 37; compare Rev. 1: 4, 12, 16; 4: 5; 5: 1, 6; 8: 2; 15: 6.

¹⁰ Num. 7: 84; Exod. 39: 10-13; 1 Kings 7: 25; compare Matt. 10: 1; Rev. 12: 1; 21: 12, 14, 16, 17; 22: 2.

¹¹ Num. 6: 22-27.

¹² Exod. 40: 22-27; compare 36: 27. I have not heretofore seen this most remarkable proof cited in support of the doctrine of the Trinity.

branched chandelier, kept continually burning. A Christian can plainly see God the Father, who gives us our "daily bread" (a striking coincidence with the Savior's Creed); God the Son, our Mediator, standing before the mercy-seat and offering the incense of his prayers, and suggesting his own sacrifice when the altar was sprinkled with sacrificial blood on the day of atonement; and God the Holy Spirit, imparting his "sevenfold gifts"¹ of illumination from God to man. It is also to be noted that this exposition of the Trinity in the Tabernacle furniture, which seems to me to be the plainest and fullest in the Old Testament, also comes to us with a peculiar directness and authentication; for Moses was not *told* what to make, but *shown a pattern*, the eye-memory being much safer than ear-memory: "See, said God, that thou make all things according to the pattern that was showed thee in the mount".² From this array, it will be seen that the Biblical grounds for the doctrine of the Triune God receive no unimportant support from the Savior's Creed, which is evidently the fullest and clearest exposition thereof in Scripture.

The expression, "Three persons in one God" has its practical historic origin in the so-called Athanasian Creed. The Latin word *persona*, like the Greek *πρόσωπον*, means first a mask for use on the stage; then, a dramatic part or character (as in the expression "*dramatis personæ*"); and only much later a person or individual. So the "Persons" of the Godhead are various characters which God takes, or parts which he acts, in his dealings with men; whether or not this word should be pressed *necessarily* to mean any more than this is a question that everybody might well be allowed to settle for himself. However, it is to be observed that the revelation of the Trinity given in the Savior's Creed is wholly modalistic; we distinguish the Persons only by what they do or by their external relations to man, and not by any characters exclusively within the Godhead. In fact, nothing in Scripture tells us anything directly with regard to this; and no one who believes that the Bible contains all things necessary to salvation has any right to *require* more than a modalistic belief as a test of true Christianity. The

¹ See Rev. 4: 5; 5: 6.

² Heb. 8: 5 = Exod. 25: 40; Num. 8: 4.

doctrine of the "eternal generation" of the Son by the Father, for example, appears to be directly contradicted by Luke 1: 32 and 35, where it is expressly stated that the earthly Father of Jesus is to be the Holy Spirit, and that Jesus *shall be called* (not *has been called*, or *is in fact*) the "Son of God", *because of this earthly begetting*. The best Scriptural passage hinting on the *essential* characters in the Godhead seems to be Gen. 1: 26 and 27, where it is stated that "God created man in his own image and likeness". We know that man has a threefold nature; will, affection, and intellect; and a direct comparison of these three "persons" in man with the divine Persons will satisfy practically every difficulty of the doctrine of the essential Trinity except that of the incarnation and kenosis, the "miracle of miracles, the central mystery of godliness";¹ and, in this connection, it is well to remember the Savior's unqualified words, "No one knoweth who the Son is, save the Father".²

ANTHROPOLOGY. The Savior's Creed declares the Fatherhood of God and the divine sonship of man. It also declares the brotherhood of man, from (a) God's Fatherhood, (b) the continual use of "us", "our",—not "me", "my",—(c) man's obligation completely to forgive others. It also declares man's dependence on God, and his continual need for prayer. I believe it also suggests a threefold nature in man, corresponding to God's threefold nature: will, emotions, intellect.

ECCELESIOLOGY. The ecclesiology of this Creed is patriarchal: the God-Father and his loyal progeny, loyal to their Father-King and to one another. A "tyrant" is, strictly, one who rules without election or family right: there is nothing tyrannical in this ecclesiology. It is the duty of the church to carry out the principles laid down in this Creed, especially by inculcating a reverence for God, by spreading his kingdom, by accomplishing his will, by caring for the needy, by preaching repentance and a forgiving spirit unto the forgiveness of sins, and by urging upon all Christians a complete consecration to God's will and a seeking of the spiritual life.

SOTERIOLOGY. The soteriology of the Lord's Prayer appears to be somewhat remarkable, and is certainly very full. It would

¹ Schaff, History of the Christian Church, III, § 142, p. 762.

² Luke 10: 22.

seem to recognize three distinct stages of human progress in passing from sin and godlessness to perfect godliness. While this idea is somewhat unusual, at least has not been generally so definitely formulated elsewhere, it will really help us more clearly to understand several dark problems, and has plenty of historical and Biblical sanction. Heretofore, the status of the pious heathen, the half-way covenanters, &c., has not been very clear, on the one side; and equally so, on the other side, the theory of the "second blessing", "storehouse of merit", &c.

We certainly see in the world a great class of really good people,—pious heathen, misguided Jews, and those generally who do not accept Jesus Christ as their personal and divine Savior, who are not to be classed with the wicked; they reverence God, though they may call him by a name strange to our ears; they pray to him, and believe that he hears them; loves them and cares for them; they know God the Father. Then, we see a second class, calling themselves Christians, after the name of God the Son, who have received pardon through Jesus's blood and acknowledge him as their King. Yet again, we see a third class, continually speaking of the spiritual life, the indwelling Spirit (not "with" but "in", John 14: 17) and proclaiming the existence of a "second blessing". These three classes identically correspond with the three couplets of petitions; and a careful study of the Savior's Creed along this line will set us straight at many points. Since the Savior certainly would not tell us to pray for something that he had no purpose of giving us, we must believe that the third stage, as here described, is attainable by all Christians, on earth, especially since one Person of the Godhead has charge thereof, as it were. On the other hand, we may remember that those who have the true indwelling Presence are usually characterized by proclaiming God's power, not their own attainments, or obtainments.

Nay, further, we may find some very remarkable parallels between these different stages;—in passing from godlessness to acknowledgment of God, the gateway is faith, faith in God the Father; in passing on to Christianity, the gateway is again faith, faith in Jesus Christ; in passing to the spiritual plane, the gateway is still faith, faith in the Holy Spirit, of whose existence many Christians appear to be still in as much ignorance as were those

Ephesian disciples¹. So, again, the Savior's Creed shows man's acknowledgments, on entering the three stages, to be, respectively, reverence for God, loyalty to Christ, the King, and submission to the will of God, as revealed to man by the Holy Spirit. Man surrenders first his self-sufficiency, then his sin, then his all; which acts are called respectively humiliation, repentance, consecration. God's acknowledgments are respectively, as we find plainly stated in the Creed, providence, pardon, sanctification; providence for the present, pardon for the sins of the past, and sanctification delivering us from the sins of the future. The respective relationships may be described as patronage, adoption, indwelling. The whole may be tabulated somewhat as follows:

	Door of Faith in	Man's acknowledgment.	Man's surrender.	God's acknowledgment.	Relationship.	Time.
Wicked or Godless.						
	God the Father.	Reverence to God.	Self-sufficiency (humiliation).	Providence.	Patronage.	Present.
Pious.						
	Christ.	Loyalty to Jesus, our King.	(Sin repentance).	Pardon.	Adoption.	Past.
Christian.						
	Holy Spirit.	Submission to the Holy Spirit.	All (consecration).	Sanctification.	Indwelling.	Future.
Spiritual.						

COSMOLOGY. The view of the universe given us in this Creed is stupendous and inconceivably grand. First, the Triune

¹ Acts 19: 2.

God, whose very name is to be adored, who is Father and King of all godly men and whose power is not limited even by the problem of the complete regeneration of all who this desire and ask. Second, his purposes in creating man: that he might have somewhat upon which to lavish a Father's loving care, a Savior's divine forgiveness and the constant guidance and the deifying power of his presence through the Holy Spirit. Again, man's whole duty; to hallow God's name, to give him loyal allegiance and to do his will perfectly; accomplished through filial trust, love and docility. Again, we have a picture of man as an inhabitant of this earth, gradually advancing, both as a race and as individuals, from godlessness to piety, through piety to philanthropy, and through philanthropy to true Christian mysticism, the highest estate in this world. Truly this Creed is sufficiently comprehensive, for it comprehends everything in heaven and earth.

ESCHATOLOGY. As to eschatology, the Savior's Creed teaches practically nothing. We might reasonably infer four different future states, for the wicked, the pious, the Christian and the Spiritual, respectively; but this is not stated, much less are we given any hint as to the character of future conditions. Still, we might hazard a guess, that the wicked would be destroyed, the pious somehow "cared for", the Christians received into their heavenly home, and that the spiritual would be closest to the person of God. However, the Bible is preeminently a book for the present life; and we will do well not to weave too elaborate a fabric of guess-work on the future state.

From the foregoing, it seems evident that, in what has heretofore been called the Lord's Prayer, we have in reality a most carefully worded creed; setting forth, in the best form found anywhere in the Bible, the nature and work of the Three Persons in the Godhead and their relations to men.

It is also plain that the real nature¹ of this Creed and its

¹ The trinitarian arrangement has lately been observed: see Spence, Exell & Neill's *Thirty Thousand Thoughts*, No. 2144 (I, 373), quoting Dr. Marcus Dods. Also, Tholuck, 2, 2, p. 140. Pfannkuche also expressed his opinion that Christ meant the Lord's Prayer to serve for a symbol of faith to his disciples: *Eichhorn's Allgem. Bibl. der bibl. Litt.*, Vol. 10, sec. 846.

importance as such have not heretofore been understood, even by the apostles; for, had they been so known, the interpretation would have been transmitted along with the phraseology, or at least hinted at in some of their writings.

Obviously, then, the author of this wonderful Creed purposely concealed its true nature from those to whom it was imparted. And his purpose may best be estimated from the results: its transmission to us, through the dark eras of crime and human creeds, unimpaired and untainted with any suspicion of human tampering,—a heliographic message, as it were, flashed to us direct from Christ himself, across what may have been a hostile country,—bearing to us its wonderful message.

Yet what human power or wisdom could have foreseen the dark ages, with their peculiar combination of crime and creed-making: who could have looked past these to the dawn of a better day and have foreseen the Christocentric and fraternal tendencies of the present age;—who could have so veiled so plain a message and planned its disclosure at the proper time,¹—except a God?

Surely that same divine wisdom which shines from every jot and tittle of this wonderful Prayer-Creed is here manifest as well. The Lord's Prayer contains within itself and even in its wonderful history the ABSOLUTE DEMONSTRATION of its divine origin.

And what is the message that our Savior has sent direct to us, his twentieth century followers? what is that communication which he sealed up with such care for its transmission to us?

Is it the doctrine of the Trinity?—Hardly, for that is quite well established already. The battle for the establishment of this doctrine was fought out and won long years ago, without

¹ "There is more of valuable truth yet to be gleaned from the sacred writings, that has thus far escaped the attention of commentators, than from all other sources combined". Daniel Webster.

"The truths of the Bible are like gold in the soil. Whole generations walk over it, and know not what treasures are hidden beneath. So centuries of men pass over the Scriptures, and know not what riches lie under the feet of their interpretation. Sometimes, when they discover them, they call them new truths. One might as well call gold newly-dug, new gold." Henry Ward Beecher

the main body of the army, the best texts, ever coming onto the battle-field.

Is it the message of the Fatherhood of God?—Hardly this, for all the Christian world has its eyes open to this truth, to-day.

Is it the message of the kingdom of Christ, and of pardon through Jesus's merits?—Hardly even this, for this is now held as the central truth of Christianity.

Is it the message of the fulness and power of the Holy Spirit?—Perhaps, in part, for the world is but just awakening to this great truth. Still, there is ample Scriptural material, elsewhere, to lead us far along this line.

What, then, is the one distinctive message which this Savior's Creed alone can bring to us, for which Jesus so carefully guarded it and transmitted it to us?—It surely must be this,—*This is your Master's Creed: PUT ASIDE ALL OTHERS.* When the General speaks, the captains keep silence. "This is my beloved Son: hear him".¹

How can this be done? Shall all Christian churches repeal their present symbols at once, and take their stand on this Savior's Creed and on this alone?—This would indeed be very beautiful, and would undoubtedly greatly conduce to the advancement of God's work on earth; but it seems quite impossible at present, and may not as yet be absolutely necessary. Some Christian churches have an unalterable provision in their constitutions that their articles of religion shall never be amended: in such a case, only a revolution could effect any change. Also, if certain Christians desire a democratic church government, or others a monarchical form, and are willing to concede to others equal freedom of choice, no harm need necessarily follow. Each congregation or other organization may even, in some respects limit admission to its pulpits to ministers of its own ordination or approval; and may make admission to full membership depend upon subscription to its own constitution and articles of faith. But Christian brotherhood is a greater thing than any church membership, and should be so recognized by all. The Jewish people thought that they were especially chosen of God, exclusively for their own benefit; but God had a wider plan, that they should preserve his truth for the benefit and blessing of all the

¹ Mark 9: 7.

world: and shall Christian churches forever tread in the steps of Jewish bigotry and narrowness? A church is not a religious club, conducted for the benefit of its own members exclusively: every child of God who in an honest heart prays the Lord's Prayer—who subscribes to the Savior's Creed—should be heartily welcome as a Christian brother, everywhere, "Wherever two or three are gathered together in Jesus' name".¹ Let the Lord's Table be thrown open to the Lord's people; let the fraternal hand be extended to every Christian brother; let every barrier which separates God's people from one another be ruthlessly broken down. Let the feeling of Christian fellowship be everywhere cultivated and extended, on the simple basis of the Savior's Creed. Let us not confuse organization or method with allegiance or kinship: the army and navy—the infantry, cavalry, artillery, sailors, marines and staff—are each under separate officers and have different lines of duty; but they all are under the orders of one Commander-in-Chief, are related parts of one great belligerent scheme, and should have the warmest sympathy and friendship for one another. One badge gives access to all alike: the national colors. Let the Christian churches learn a lesson from the wagers of "cruel war": let all jealousy and criticism of other churches, all haughtiness and separatism, all personal coldness be cast to their father, the devil; if churches still wish to retain their peculiar dogmas and "isms", let them do so with a confession that these are only denominational peculiarities and not Christian essentials, that they are merely tests of local membership and not of Christian brotherhood. But let us insist firmly on those things which are plainly expressed in our Savior's own Creed, holding them fast *in his exact words only*; let us plainly declare to one another and to all the Christian household that we hold THESE WORDS AND THESE WORDS ALONE as the supreme and sole test of Christian brotherhood. Let us pray this Creed as the most earnest longing of our hearts; and let us live it, by God's grace, every moment of our lives.

Several years ago, I became convinced that, as this prayer was taught his disciples by the Savior when they asked him to teach them to pray, it was the proper introduction to other

¹ Matt. 18: 20.

prayers and should precede them, in order to prepare our minds and hearts for them, rather than be tagged at their end as a kind of afterthought: that we should first let God pray in us, for those things for which he has taught us to pray, following that with our childish and often idle prattle. Following this conviction, I began my morning devotions with the Lord's Prayer. At first, as soon as I would commence to pray this prayer, its beautiful phrases would be nearly overwhelmed by a flood of petty, personal desires, struggling for utterance. Not realizing that these had been actually inspired or suggested, by the words of the Great Prayer itself, it seemed that, during its repetition, I was being shut off from asking for what I most desired. So I came covertly to think of this as "the dumb prayer". Yet even this was better than "the formal prayer" or "the convenient prayer". But, gradually, as its wonderful depth came to be in a measure realized, and as its power began to take hold upon me, it became "the eloquent prayer"; and, later, "the powerful prayer". After the above-given analysis was given to me, it became "the all-comprehensive prayer". Now, no words seem adequate to describe it to me; but in my feeble language it is called "the wonderful prayer", or "the universal prayer". What it has become to me, it may be to every true believer: this and infinitely more; for this little scrap of literature, which we undoubtedly have to-day in the exact words in which it was spoken by God the Son, has limitless possibilities and infinite power, implanted by its Author.

O wonderful Prayer! God-given Creed! Test of the true believer, light of the groping soul, strength for the sorrowing and sin-sick, apocalypse of the mystic, God-given restorer of weary humanity! Wonderful, wonderful, wonderful: interpreter of the wonders of our own human nature; revealer of the wonders of heaven; peacemaker among men, peacemaker between God and men. Comprehensive as heaven and earth; treasure-chest of the most priceless gems of the universe!—Shed thy divine light upon our aching hearts; infuse the Presence of thy divine Maker into our waiting spirits; teach us to pray, teach us to live.—Speak, while the whole earth listens: be our watch-word; and lead us on to victory!

